

Joseph S. Murdock

*"Under Wasatch Skies" p55*

According to John Crook's journal, those who spent the winter of 1860-61 in the fort with their families were:

North Side: John Carlile, John Crook, Thomas Rasband, James Carlile, Fred Giles, Robert S. Duke, Willis Boren, James Davis, Robert Broadhead, Hyrum Oaks, Alfred Johnson, Sam Rooker, William Damaron, James Lamon and John Lee.

East Side: Alex Sessions, Richard Jones, Elisha Thomas, Bradford Sessions, Isaac Cummings, Darwin Walton, John Cummings Sr., Charles N. Carroll, George Damaron, Bailes Sprouse, Thomas Hicken, George Thompson and Norton Jacobs.

South Side: Thomas Moulton, Patrick Carroll, William Forman, John Muir, John M. Murdock, Thomas Todd, Cal Henry and Robert Carlile.

West Side: Jane Clotworthy, Zemira Palmer, James Duke, James Laird, Cub Johnson, John Davis, Robert Parker, Terry Burns, William McDonald, John Hamilton, George W. Clyde, John Witt, Joseph S. McDonald, John Jordan, a Mr. Russell and John McDonald.

By the time Spring was welcomed in 1861 the community of Heber was recognized by Church leaders in Salt Lake City as being large enough to organize into a ward. Thus, early in 1861 Joseph S. Murdock was ordained as bishop of the new ward by President Brigham Young and sent from American Fork to Heber to take charge of Church affairs. He chose as his counselors John W. Witt and Thomas Rasband. John Hamilton served as ward clerk.

Bishop Murdock also served as presiding bishop of the valley and directed the Church efforts of presiding elders who were called in the small communities that had begun to spring up in the valley. These community developments are discussed separately in later chapters.

The year 1861 proved to be a year of many significant accomplishments. With Church activity on an organized basis and the individual homes as well fixed as possible for that time, the settlers began to look to community improvements.

Provisions were made for old and new settlers to plant vegetable gardens outside the fort. Ephraim Smith and William P. Reynolds built a chopper run by horse power to chop wheat for those who could not go to the mills in Provo. While it was still somewhat crude, the chopper was a great help to those who had been grinding their flour in small hand mills.

Another bridge was built over the Provo River, this one located six miles north of Heber on the road to Salt Lake City. A good wagon road was also made through Provo Canyon, with toll being charged for use of the road.

John M. Murdock organized a cooperative sheep herd in 1860 and cared for the sheep during the summer months himself. He was able to take the sheep far enough south to winter out so that they did not need special supplies of hay. This method of caring for the sheep enabled



no children. In 1843 the young man was ordained a Seventy under the direction of the

## JOSEPH STACY MURDOCK



Joseph S. Murdock, first bishop in Heber, lived a most interesting and active life. He was born June 26, 1822, at Hamilton, Madison County, New York, and it was here that his father's family embraced Mormonism in 1836.

Some time after this the family started for the body of the Church, which at that time was located at Nauvoo, Illinois. By this time young Murdock was about 20 years of age. Before starting out with his father and other members of the family, he concluded he would marry. Miss Eunice Sweet was a noble young lady, who also believed in the new religion, and he proposed to her and they were married just prior to starting on their journey for Nauvoo, where they arrived in 1842, and met the Prophet Joseph Smith. Old father Murdock turned all his property over to the Church and in return received his "inheritance in Zion," under the direction of the prophet.

Young Murdock became well acquainted with Joseph and Hyrum, often sitting under their teachings.

On March 21, 1843, he received his patriarchal blessing under the hands of Hyrum Smith. Among other things he was promised that he should have a numerous posterity, a very peculiar promise, since the young man had been married a number of years and his wife had, as yet, borne

the saints from Nauvoo, mother, sister and for the Rocky Mountain died previous to city. While the body of the banks of the Mississippi for 500 able-bodied men nation's battles with patriot, Mr. Murdock turned over to the care of one of his sons, a mere lad, and he returned to the country. Bewildered with cattle, however, he led a military life and placed himself among those who joined the army. He continued the same, arriving in Salt Lake City on September 22, 1847, when his posterity of saints was less than

led by President Brigham Young to Green River and were coming to Zion. and still Mr. Murdock was in the fall of 1852 the second wife. His wife and the hand of Miss Ann he had two children. This time taking two and Elizabeth Hunter, and Pernetta Murdock,

Young called him to assist in settling Carson Valley and reached President Johnston's army was the Carson Valley settled to Salt Lake City. In the town took his family and work.

In 1860, he was ordained a member of Brigham Young's group over the people who lived in the county, and, therefore, of Heber. While acting he served one term as county in the territory. In 1867 he, with others, was sent to St. Joe. on the Muddy River.

When he was released by President Young to return home to Provo Valley. While on

his way home he secured a contract from the government for carrying the mail from Provo to Echo, via Provo Canyon, and continued in this business for a number of years. He was a pioneer in every sense of the word, always engaged in building up new country and making peace with the Indians. He had a magnetic influence over the redmen, who would always listen to him.

In 1889 he was arraigned before Judge Blackburn at Provo for infringement of the Edmunds-Tucker law. His first wife had died years before, and he was advised to marry one of his plural wives and repudiate the others. He was a firm believer in the principle of "plural marriage," and obeyed the principle feeling from the depths of his heart it was of God, and no man could persuade him to repudiate any of his wives. They had been true to him, and he could not go back on the sacred promises he made with them in the days of their youth. He was sentenced to a term of one month in the territorial penitentiary for unlawful cohabitation. The aged gentleman by this time had fully convinced the judge of his honesty. Committal papers were handed him and he was allowed to go from the courtroom unattended by guard. He went back home to visit his family, then went down to Salt Lake and presented his own committal papers at the penitentiary, was taken in, and served out his sentence of one month.

In the days of the Black Hawk troubles, Mr. Murdock took a leading hand in settling the Indian uprisings of those days. When Wasatch Stake was organized he was made president of the High Council, which position he held at the time of his death. He always manifested implicit confidence in Mormonism, even to the hour of his death. He was the husband of five wives, the father of 32 children, and he had 137 grandchildren and six great-grandchildren, a total posterity of 175, so he lived to see the words of Patriarch Hyrum Smith fulfilled to the very letter.

## ELIZABETH HUNTER MURDOCK

Elizabeth Hunter Murdock, wife of Joseph Stacy Murdock was born on April 17, 1839, in Clarkmman, Clackmmanshire, Scot-



land, the third daughter of Robert and Agnes Hunter. The parents enjoyed a happy life, except for a difference in their religious views. When the Mormon missionaries preached the gospel to Agnes, she accepted it, but was rejected by her family, particularly two brothers who were Methodist ministers. This viewpoint on the part of the brothers intrigued Robert, and he investigated the Church and joined, uniting the family religiously.

Desiring to come to Zion, the Hunter family began saving and planning. Agnes and her children came first, leaving Robert behind to dispose of the home and store. They sailed on September 4, 1850, from Liverpool, traveling to New Orleans, and from there to St. Louis. They settled in a little mining town of Graviess to wait for their husband and father. But within a year, Agnes died, leaving the four children, ages 16 to 6, all alone. Their uncle, Adam Hunter, soon arrived from Scotland, only to bring word of the illness and death of the father. One of the girls went to Utah with her Uncle Adam, and the others later came with David Love, who married the oldest of the girls. During the trip across the plains, Elizabeth had to watch over her little brother, Jimmy, and care for the family cow. She walked the entire distance to Utah barefoot. They arrived in Salt Lake on August 15, 1852.

Elizabeth found work in a number of the homes of the saints, and also renewed a friendship with a girl friend from Scotland, Jane Sharp. She and Jane were married to Joseph Murdock on June 11, 1854. With her husband and his wives, Jane went to Carson, Nevada, on a colonizing mission for the Church, and then, with the threat of Johnston's army in Utah, they returned the next year and settled in Amer-

ican Fork. The families prospered here for four years, and in 1860 Elizabeth went with her husband to Heber, where he was called as bishop. They later went to southern Nevada on what was called the "muddy mission," to help settle Dixie and start raising cotton.

Elizabeth and her family had a difficult time in the "Muddy" area. The land was hard and untillable, and the food was coarse and tasteless. They thought they were in Utah, but when it was learned the land was in Nevada, and when Arizona also tried to claim the land, the settlers were instructed by President Brigham Young to settle elsewhere. Elizabeth returned to Heber, where she lived among family and friends for the rest of her life. She was always active in the Church, and the Relief Society was her special joy. She served in every ward capacity and was in the presidency of the Stake Relief Society, traveling by carriage and buggy to visit all the wards.

At 75, Elizabeth broke her leg and the doctors told her she would never walk again, but she mustered up determination and, with the help of a crutch, was able to walk everywhere. Her love of cooking and of books kept her busy throughout her life. In her declining years she sold her home and built an apartment on the side of her daughter Anne's home, where she happily lived until her ninety-sixth year, dying at home on June 11, 1935.

## JANE SHARP MURDOCK

In Scotland "a wee bonnie lassie," Jane Sharp was born to Nathaniel and Cecelia Sharp on April 13, 1838, in a small town called Sterling.

The father worked in the mines. The miners lived in apartments furnished by the mine owners. The Sharp family and the Hunter family lived across the hall from each other and Jane Sharp and Elizabeth Hunter became fast friends. This friendship lasted all the days of their lives.

After some years, Nathaniel Sharp contracted miner's consumption and passed away after a long and painful illness, leaving his wife and children alone. She later married Gibson Condie. The Hunter family and the Cecelia Sharp Condie family left their native land to come to Zion after ac-

cepting the gospel. They endured many hardships and settled in the barren valley of Great Salt Lake.

Brigham Young was at that time managing what was called the Church pastures, which had been moved from Davis County to Salt Lake County.

Joseph Stacy Murdock, a great friend and admirer of Brigham Young, arrived in Salt Lake Valley on September 22, 1847, and was given employment at the Church pastures and dairy farm.

At this time polygamy was being practiced among the Latter-day Saints, so Jane Sharp and Elizabeth Hunter became the wives of Joseph Stacy Murdock on June 11, 1854. Jane Sharp Murdock was the mother of nine fine children, six boys and three girls. She lived most of her life in Heber City. Jane Murdock had a loom and spent many an hour weaving carpets, sewing rug rugs and coloring them to make the carpets prettier.

She knitted socks and gloves for her family of boys, sewing everything by hand. She also found time to help with the poor and assisted in the Relief Society whenever help was needed. Jane traveled much to carry cookies, bread, jelly or some tasty bite to old folks or the sick or as birthday surprises. Jane spent many nights helping to care for the sick or little children, or to baby-sit, for free, to help a tired mother.

She loved to go to meetings, parties or anywhere to visit or have a little recreation. She usually had good health.

The children of Joseph Stacy and Jane Sharp were: David Nathaniel, Nymphus Hyrum, Willard Milton, William Henry, Stanley Gibson, Margaret Ellen, Sarah Jane and Royal Stacy. Cecilia died as a child.

### ELIZA CLARK MURDOCK

Eliza Clark Murdock, wife of Joseph Stacy Murdock, was born May 17, 1830, in Herefordshire, England, daughter of Thomas Henry and Charlotte Gailley Clark. Her father, a farmer, had a large family, and all had to work hard.

Thomas Clark, her father, was an elder in the Church of the United Brethren, but when Wilford Woodruff spoke to the

group as a body, the congregation joined the LDS Church. The Clark family later emigrated to America, traveling six weeks on a sailing vessel and then going to Nauvoo. As a girl, Eliza remembered selling eggs at the Mansion House for three cents a dozen.

From Nauvoo, Eliza's father was called to fill a mission in England, and on his return the family moved to Utah, settling in Grantsville. It was here that Eliza met Joseph S. Murdock, who already had one wife, Eunice. Eliza was married on June 2, 1852, in the Salt Lake Endowment House. She proved to be a good wife, caring for her family and in her quiet way always backing up the things her husband needed to do.

She desired to have money of her own, and always kept a few head of cattle and some sheep, which she would sell in the fall. At April and October conferences she always had some money for her husband to attend the meetings in Salt Lake.

She died on April 4, 1898. As she lay in state, her husband said to two of her granddaughters: "Girls, I wish you could be like your grandmother. She was mild and gentle, never once in our married life doing anything to cause me trouble. We were a big family, but she always did as I asked her, and was a good woman."

To the members of the family this was a fitting summation and tribute to her life.

### PERNETTA (NETTIE) MURDOCK

Pernetta Murdock, youngest wife of Joseph Stacy Murdock, came first to the Murdock home as a baby to be reared by Eunice, and by a strange turn of circumstances became one of his five wives.

The girl, an Indian, had been stolen by other Indians in a raid, and then discovered by Porter Rockwell, who purchased the girl and also a boy from the Indians to save their lives. Rockwell approached Murdock about taking the two youngsters, and since his first wife, Eunice, had borne no children, Murdock agreed to take the children for her to rear, giving Porter Rockwell two yoke of oxen for them.

Eunice took the youngsters to her heart, and particularly was fond of the girl, giv-

### HEBER BIOGRAPHIES

ing her every advantage of education and training. The exact time of her birth is not known, but it is assumed to be about 1842. The girl was taught to be a splendid housekeeper and excellent cook. As she grew to young womanhood she caught the eye of an unscrupulous man, and he persisted in his attention to her. Joseph S. Murdock worried that the man would entice the girl away and then abandon her, so he went to Salt Lake and presented the problem to President Brigham Young. He received a startling answer when President Young told him that he should marry the girl himself. He resisted, indicating she was like a daughter to him, but President Young blessed him and said it was the thing to do. The turn of events caused some difficulty at home, but with faith and prayer they made plans for the marriage, which was performed June 25, 1859, in the Endowment House in Salt Lake City. The other wives welcomed her into the family relationship and treated her very kindly. Before her husband's death she bore him five children, one of whom died in infancy.

Nettie, as she was known, traveled with her husband to the "Muddy Mission," and also to Heber and the mission call in Dixie. She returned to Heber to rear her children and was always very proud of them. She was a thrifty woman, and would earn extra money by washing, cleaning or helping others. She also earned a little extra money from the sale of hops. She was an excellent cook, and many remember her particularly for her groundcherry pies.

Nettie died in November, 1887, a very young woman. She was known to have lived a good life, though a very hard one. Those in the family agree that had she lived she could have been proud of her children and her many grandchildren. 437

Joseph Stacy Murdock

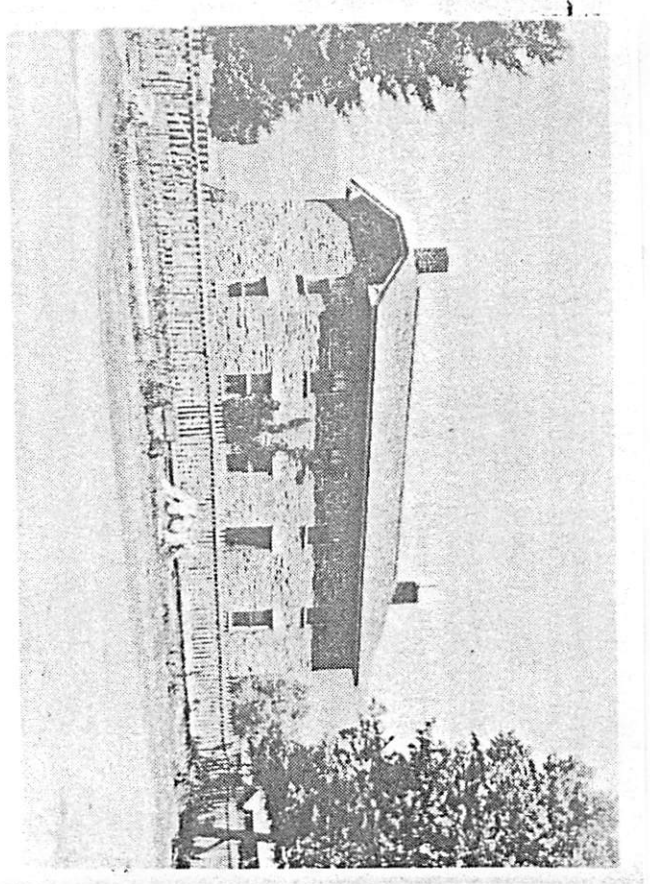
Joseph Murdock proved to be an able administrator and particularly efficient in dealing with the Indians. His kindness and generosity was respected by all. The Indians were particularly impressed because he had reared a young Indian girl and later married her.<sup>5</sup>

Abram Hatch replaced Joseph S. Murdock as Presiding Bishop in December of 1867. He had been sent to Provo Valley by Brigham Young, and his arrival on

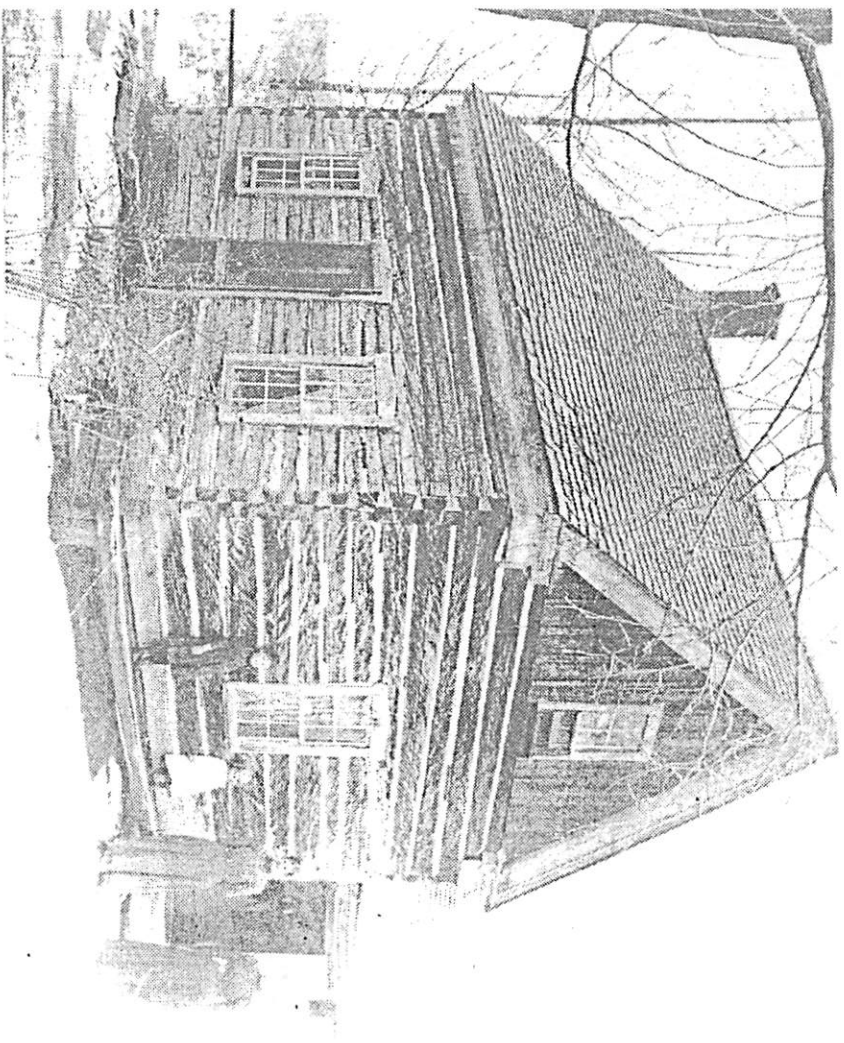
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<sup>5</sup>William Lindsay, "A History of Wasatch County," *op. cit.*, p. 8.

*Homes of Joseph Stacy Murdock  
Families*



Rock Home of Joseph Stacy Murdock at Heber City  
Courtesy: Irene Marella Stanley, Heber City



Jane Sharp Murdock with daughter, Sara Jane, and children at her pioneer log cabin,  
which still stands at Heber City  
(Author)



## CHAPTER FIVE

### *...And They Loved the Lord Their God*

The Mormon pioneers in their westward trek sought an area where religious freedom would be unquestioned. Bitter persecutions in the east and mid-west had forced them to leave established communities and search for new homes on the western frontier.

When Zion was established in the tops of the mountains near the Great Salt Lake, President Brigham Young was both leader of the Church and head of the civil government. This mixture of Church and state proved entirely fair because only members of the Church lived in the area.

Later developments, however, and an influx of non-Church members forced a separation and the appointment of civil officials in the territory by officers of the federal government.

As the central settlement of Salt Lake City became established and the community grew, President Young called faithful members of the Church to begin colonizing the outlying areas. Valleys that showed promise of sufficient water and livable climates were scouted and plans were made for settlements.

Those who left their homes in Salt Lake or other established areas often suffered extreme privation before they conquered the elements and created homes and farms to sustain themselves. Moving into an area, they first had to select farm and home sites that appeared suitable. The land had to be cleared and irrigation waters controlled. Logs had to be hewn for homes and buildings. These dwellings usually had dirt floors, dirt roofs and mud packed into the cracks between the logs.

Yet, in spite of hardships that would have caused a less hardy people to give up and return to the areas that others before them had won from the wilderness, these people kept on struggling until victory was theirs.

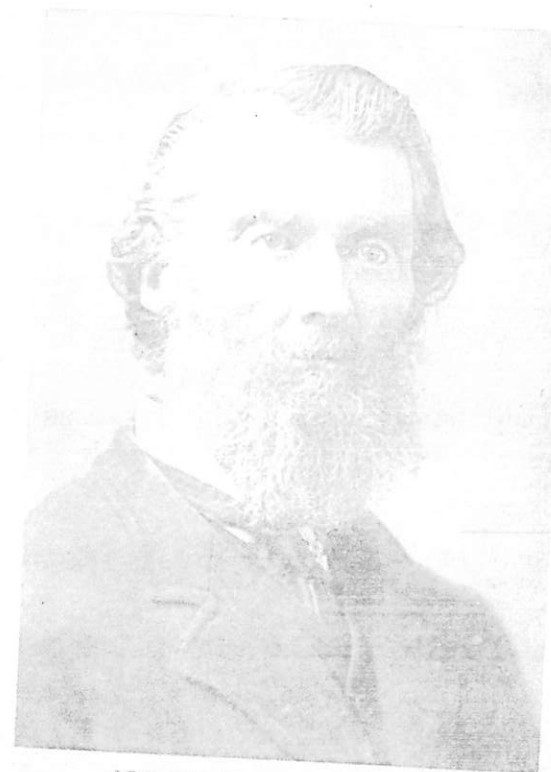
The motivating influence that helped them endure the struggles of winning a new land was a firm faith that what they were doing was inspired of God. Believing in the divine mission of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, they knew that their pioneering work would open the way for others to carry on the work of God on the earth.

As members of the Church moved into the Wasatch or Provo Valley area they quickly built churches in which to worship and renew their faith and conviction. The first group that moved into the valley selected William Meeks to be their spiritual leader. However, when Elder Meeks chose not to make a permanent home in the valley, William Madison Wall was named presiding elder over the new valley, and given authority to conduct Church business.

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43  
The first chapel, a log structure 20x40 feet, was built in time for the Pioneer Day celebration, July 24, 1860, and served the saints for nearly five years. Though it was small and its furnishings crude, it was accepted in the sight of the Lord. Those who came within its walls to worship were blessed abundantly with His spirit.

Because the people had faith that their new valley would be fruitful and yield food to sustain their lives, they were blessed profusely by the Lord. Their numbers grew rapidly and in 1861 the officials of the Church felt a ward should be organized.



JOSEPH STACY MURDOCK  
First Bishop of Heber City

A familiar pattern in early Church government was followed as President Young and the general authorities established the ward in Heber. Joseph S. Murdock, not a resident of the valley, yet a man who had proved his ability in Church leadership, was ordained as bishop of the new ward. Under the direction of Church officials he moved with his family to Heber City and set about to organize the new ward. This pattern of calling Bishops and Stake Presidents was followed for many years by President Young and his successors, and proved to be a valuable train-



The children of Joseph Stacy Murdock, first bishop of Heber City. Most of them spent their lives in Wasatch County. Seated, left to right, Ann Coleman; Margaret Murray, Ellen C. (Lottie) Wright, Jane Hylton. Back row, left to right, Parley A. Murdock, Andrew Murdock, Alva Murdock, William Murdock, David N. Murdock, John H. Murdock and Frank Murdock.

ing program for leadership. Those of experienced leadership quickly trained their counselors and local brethren and then were often called to other areas, leaving Church administration in the hands of those they had trained.

Bishop Murdock chose men of the area as his counselors. They were John W. Witt and Thomas Rasband with John Hamilton as ward clerk. In addition to presiding over Heber Ward, these men also directed Church affairs throughout the valley.

Under Bishop Murdock's direction, presiding elders were appointed in the communities that by this time were large enough to meet separately. John Harvey was named at Center Creek in 1861 and Sidney Epperson was called as presiding elder in 1862 for the upper Snake Creek settlement. In 1864 David Van Wagoner was sustained as presiding elder for the lower Snake Creek area and John Watkins of Midway was later appointed to preside in Charleston and traveled there to hold meetings on Sunday.

The calling of Bishop Murdock in Heber Ward lasted until 1867 when he was called by President Young to move to Southern Utah and attempt to raise cotton there. During his six years in Wasatch County he gained the love and respect of the people for his kindness and gener-

osity. He was also respected by the Indians because he had reared a young Indian girl and then later married her.

John W. Witt acted as bishop of the ward temporarily for several months and in December, 1867, President Young appointed Abram Hatch of Lehi, Utah County, as the new bishop of the ward.

Near Christmas time he left Utah County with his family and started for Heber and his new calling. It happened to be a very cold, rainy day and the canyon roads were bad, so William Averett, Robert Lindsay and Orson Hicken were dispatched to help the new bishop and his family make the journey.

His coming to the valley opened a new era in the lives of the people, for not only was Bishop Hatch an able Church administrator but he was also a man of sound business and financial judgment. Leaders called in the past had been particularly fitted for the pioneering work of the new area, but the community was established now and growing rapidly. The business experience of Bishop Hatch was to serve the people well during the 33 years he held positions of Church leadership in the area.

In addition to establishing a community store and strengthening the Church organization, Bishop Hatch encouraged the people to build better and more convenient homes and more adequate roads. He also played an important role in construction of a canal that benefitted the people of Heber and vicinity for many years.

During 1872 and 1873 Bishop Hatch directed the building of a social hall on main street. It was used for town meetings, Church services, dances and theatrical performances and served for many years.

Then in 1877 the area had grown sufficiently that the Church officials decided to organize a stake in the area. On July 14 and 15, 1877, Elders John Taylor and Franklin D. Richards of the Council of the Twelve Apostles came to Heber to effect the organization.

Bishop Hatch was called as the first stake president with Thomas H. Giles as first counselor and Henry S. Alexander, second counselor. Charles Shelton was sustained as stake clerk. High councilmen sustained were Joseph S. Murdock, John W. Witt, Isaac Baum, John Muir, James J. Howe, John McDonald, Gustavus Johnson, Henry McMullin, Sr., George W. Brown, Attewall Wootton, Sr., Henry Clegg and Daniel Bigelow.

At the same time Heber was divided into two wards with all those living east of Main Street included in the East Ward and all those west of Main Street in the West Ward. Thomas Rasband was ordained bishop of the East Ward with John Muir and Harmon Cummings as counselors and William Forman was chosen to head the West Ward with John Crook and George T. Giles as his counselors.

The stake, as organized, extended into Uintah County on the east, north into what is now Summit County and covered all of Wasatch



*Sarah Louisa Murdock*

*the Settling*



Joseph Stacy Murdock family: (Back row, L-R) Ester Brown, Tom, Zina, Calvin, Lottie. (Front L-R) John H., Mother Elizabeth Hunter and Father Joseph Stacy, Sarah Lindsay.



Left: Bert and Ell' Murdock, George Murdock holding Lorin, Lin Murdock.